

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9675

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SUBJECT: REACTION TO SISCO TESTIMONY

REF: STATE 169027

1. THE TESTIMONY OF UNDER SECRETARY SISCO BEFORE THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE ON JULY 10 WAS MENTIONED IN ALMOST ALL ATHENS NEWSPAPERS THE FOLLOWING DAY, WITH VARYING DEGREES OF PROMINENCE. IN MOST CASES, HOWEVER, THE COVERAGE CONSISTED OF BRIEF REFERENCES TO OR ONLY SHORT EXCERPTS FROM SISCO'S REMARKS TO THE COMMITTEE. THIS WAS USUALLY IN THE CONTEXT OF A MORE GENERAL STORY ON THE TURKISH AID ISSUE. MOREOVER, EVEN IN THOSE CASES WHERE HEADLINES INTRODUCING THE STORY MENTIONED UNDER SECRETARY SISCO BY NAME, THE GREATER PART OF THE TEXT OF THE STORIES WAS DEVOTED TO OTHER ASPECTS OF THE TURKISH AID QUESTION.

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2. REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLES OF THE PRESS TREATMENT

FOLLOW (ALL FROM JULY 11 PRESS): ATHINAIKI (LIBERAL-PAPANDREOU SUPPORTER) "SISCO OPENLY IN FAVOR OF AID TO TURKEY"; ESPERINI (CONSERVATIVE) "SISCO INTRODUCES FORD SOLUTION TO CONGRESS"; TA NEA (LIBERAL-OPPOSITION) "CIA, SISCO, PENTAGON IN FAVOR OF TURKEY: ALL ARE IN A HURRY FOR AID TO BE RESTORED"; ESTIA (CONSERVATIVE) "SHARP STATEMENT OF SISCO" (IN THE CONTEXT OF THE STORY, THIS HEADLINE REFERRED TO SISCO'S STATEMENT THAT FAILURE ON THE PART OF TURKEY TO ADOPT A MORE FLEXIBLE POSITION WOULD GO TO THE HEART OF AMERICAN-TURKISH RELATIONS); AKROPOLIS (CONSERVATIVE) "THE FATE OF FORD'S PROPOSAL ON AID IS DOUBTFUL-SISCO: NO ASSURANCE THAT TURKEY WILL NEGOTIATE IN EXCHANGE FOR AID RESUMPTION".

3. THE ABOVE NEWSPAPERS ARE THE ONLY ONES WHICH MENTION UNDER SECRETARY SISCO IN HEADLINES. SEVERAL OTHER PAPERS, E.G. VRADYNI (PRO-GOVERNMENT), APOYEVMATINI (PRO-GOVERNMENT), AVQHI (COMMUNIST/COMMUNIST FRONT:KKE-INTERIOR AND EDA), AND ELEFTHEROS COSMOS (RIGHT WING) CARRY SHORT EXTRACTS OF SISCO'S STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO HIM BUT WITHOUT CITING HIS NAME IN THEIR HEADLINES. IN ALMOST ALL CASES, ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING POINTS MADE BY SISCO WERE USED: (A) THAT THE CONTINUED CUTOFF OF AID TO TURKEY IS NOT IN THE U.S. NATIONAL INTEREST; (B) THAT THE CONTINUED CUTOFF OF AID WOULD WEAKEN U.S. INFLUENCE, THREATEN NATO AND LESSEN CHANCES OF A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT; AND (C) THAT THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THE RESUMPTION OF AID WOULD BRING ABOUT A MORE FLEXIBLE ATTITUDE ON THE PART OF TURKEY, BUT THAT SUCH A FAILURE ON TURKEY'S PART WOULD GO TO THE HEART OF THE AMERICAN-TURKISH RELATIONSHIP.

4. THERE WERE NO DIRECT REFERENCES TO THE SISCO PRESENTATION IN SUBSEQUENT EDITORIALS ON THE TURKISH AID ISSUE NOR WAS ANY PRESS COMMENTARY RELATED DIRECTLY TO SISCO'S REMARKS. HOWEVER, THREE PIECES DID APPEAR A FEW DAYS AFTER THE SISCO TESTIMONY THAT COULD BE CONSTRUED AS HAVING AT LEAST SOME INDIRECT RELATION TO THE THRUST OF HIS REMARKS, BUT AGAIN WITHOUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IDENTIFYING THE UNDER SECRETARY WITH THEM: (A) TO VIMA ON JULY 15 CARRIED A FRONT PAGE STORY UNDER THE HEADLINE "AID TO TURKEY WILL SERVE GREECE". THIS STATEMENT WAS ATTRIBUTED TO A STATE DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE AND WAS CHARACTERIZED IN THE STORY AS "SURPRISING". THE STORY REPORTED THE STATE DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE AS STATING THAT "IT IS IN GREECE'S INTEREST TO AVOID THE ALLIANCE OF TURKEY WITH THE SOVIET UNION." (B) VRADYNI

ON JULY 16 HAD A FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL ON THE TURKISH
AID ISSUE WHICH INCLUDED THE OBSERVATION, INTER ALIA,
THAT "IT IS NOT FOR OFFICIAL WASHINGTON TO USE GREEK
INTERESTS AS AN ARGUMENT OF PERSUASION TO
CONGRESS". (C) KATHIMERINI OF JULY 18 IN A LEAD
EDITORIAL CITED UNVERIFIED INFORMATION THAT SECRETARY
KISSINGER AND PRESIDENT FORD IN "BEHIND THE SCENES
CONTACT" WITH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS HAD MAINTAINED THAT
THE GREEK GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO THE
RESUMPTION OF TURKISH AID. THE EDITORIAL CALLS AGAIN
ON THE GREEK GOVERNMENT, AS KATHIMERINI HAD DONE
PREVIOUSLY, TO MAKE "A PUBLIC AND RESPONSIBLE
CLARIFICATION OF GREECE'S 'POSITION' ON THE SUBJECT
AND A CLEAR DESCRIPTION OF THE REAL SITUATION--
WITHOUT DELAY."
KUBISCH

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